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Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities
New York, 24 May-4 June 2004

Draft report of the third session of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities (Part one)

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 56/168 of 19 December 2001, the General Assembly decided to establish an Ad Hoc Committee to consider proposals for a comprehensive and integral international convention to promote and protect the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities, based on the holistic approach in the work done in the fields of social development, human rights and non-discrimination and taking into account the recommendations of the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission for Social Development.

2. The Assembly, in its resolution 58/246 of 23 December 2003, also decided that, prior to its fifty-ninth session, the Ad Hoc Committee should hold two sessions of a duration of 10 working days each in 2004.

II. Organizational matters

A. Opening and duration of the third session

3. The Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities held its third session at United Nations Headquarters from 24 May to 4 June 2004. In the course of its session, the Committee held 18 plenary meetings.

4. The Division for Social Policy and Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs acted as the substantive secretariat, while the

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Disarmament and Decolonization Affairs Branch of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management served as secretariat of the Ad Hoc Committee.

5. The third session of the Ad Hoc Committee was opened by the Chairman of the Committee, Luis Gallegos Chiriboga, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the United Nations. The Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Jose Antonio Ocampo, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, made a statement on behalf of the Secretary-General. The Representative of New Zealand, on behalf of the Chairman of the Working Group of the Ad Hoc Committee, Ambassador Don MacKay, introduced the report of the Working Group (A/AC.265/2004/WG.1).

B. Officers

6. The following officers continued to serve on the Bureau of the Committee:

Chairman:
Luis Gallegos (Ecuador)

Vice-Chairmen:
Ivana Grolova (Czech Republic)
Leslie Gatan (Philippines)
Jeanette Ndhlovu (South Africa)
Carina Mårtensson (Sweden)

C. Agenda

7. At the 1st meeting, on 24 May 2004, the Ad Hoc Committee adopted its provisional agenda, as contained in document A/AC.265/2004/L.1, as follows:

1. Opening of the session.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Organization of work.
4. Report of the Working Group of the Ad Hoc Committee.
5. Consideration of the draft text contained in the report of the Working Group of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities (A/AC.265/2004/WG.1, annex I).
6. Conclusions of the third session of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities.
7. Consideration and adoption of the report of the third session of the Ad Hoc Committee.

D. Documentation

8. The Ad Hoc Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Provisional agenda (A/AC.265/2004/L.1);

(b) List of participants (A/AC.265/2004/INF/1);

(c) Draft organization of work (A/AC.265/2004/CRP.1);

(d) Report of the Working Group looking at the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities (A/AC.265/2004/CRP.2);

(e) Letter dated 3 March 2004 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/AC.265/2004/1);

(f) Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on progress in the implementation of the recommendations contained in the study on the human rights of persons with disabilities (A/AC.265/2004/2);

(g) Use of the United Nations Voluntary Fund on Disability to support the participation of non-governmental organizations and experts (A/AC.265/2004/3);

(h) Compilation of proposals for a comprehensive and integral international convention on protection and promotion of the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities (A/AC.265/CRP.13 and Add.1);

(i) Report of the Working Group to the Ad Hoc Committee (A/AC.265/2004/WG.1).

III. Organization of work

9. During its plenary meetings, the Ad Hoc Committee conducted a first reading of the draft text of the convention, as contained in the report of the Working Group (A/AC.265/2004/WG.1). The Committee considered articles 1 to 24 and deferred the consideration of the title, the structure, the preamble, definitions (article 3) and monitoring (article 25) to the fourth session, to be held in August-September.

IV. Decision

10. At its 18th meeting, on 4 June 2004, the Ad Hoc Committee decided to annex to the present report the document entitled "Proposed modifications to the draft text of the convention as of 6 p.m., 4 June" (see annex II).

V. Recommendations

11. The Ad Hoc Committee invites the Bureau of the Ad Hoc Committee to hold an intersessional meeting regarding the preparation and organization of the fourth session of the Committee, including a provisional agenda, to be issued at least three weeks prior to the fourth session of the Committee, containing, inter alia, an indication of the framework for discussion.

12. With regard to accessibility, and in accordance with General Assembly decision 56/473, the Ad Hoc Committee strongly recommends that the Secretary-

General implement some measures, within existing resources, as first steps, to facilitate accessibility to the United Nations premises, technology and documents. Therefore, the Committee invites, among others, persons with disabilities and experts, to present proposals in this sense.

VI. Adoption of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee

13. At the 18th meeting, on 4 June 2004, Jeanette Ndhlovu (South Africa), as Vice-Chairperson with rapporteurial responsibilities, introduced the draft report of the Ad Hoc Committee (A/AC.265/2004/L.2).

14. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted the draft report to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session (A/AC.265/2004/L.2), as orally amended.

Annex I

Additional list of non-governmental organizations accredited to the Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities

1. Bizchut, the Israel Human Rights Centre for People with Disabilities
2. International Paralympic Committee (IPC)
3. People with Disabilities (PwDI)
4. Tunisian Association for the Promotion of Employment for the Handicapped

Annex II

Proposed modifications to the draft text of the convention as of 6 p.m., 4 June